



THE DELUGE

By DAVID GRAHAM PHILLIPS, Author of "THE COST OF COUNTRY" and "THE DELUGE"

DANGER SIGNALS.

At that time I did not myself go over the bills before the legislature of those states in which I had interests. I trusted that work to my lawyers—and, like every man who ever absolutely trusted an important division of his affairs to another, I was severely punished. One morning my eye happened to light upon a minor paragraph in a newspaper—a list of the "small bills yesterday approved by the governor." In the list was one "defining the power of sundry commissions." Those words seemed to me somehow to spell "joker." But why did I call up my lawyers to ask them about it? It's a mystery to me. All I know is that, busy as I was, something inside me compelled me to drop everything else and hunt that "joker" down.

I got Saxe—then senior partner in Brown, Saxe & Einstein—on the phone, and said: "Just see and tell me, will you, what the 'bill defining the power of sundry commissions'—the bill the governor signed yesterday?"

"Certainly, Mr. Blacklock," came the answer. My nerves are, and always have been, on the watch for the looks and the tones and the gestures that are just a shade off the natural; and I feel that I do Saxe no injustice when I say his tone was not a shade, but a full color, off the natural. So I was prepared for what he said when he returned to the telephone. "I'm sorry, Mr. Blacklock, but we seem unable to lay our hands on that bill at this moment."

"Why not?" said I, in the tone that makes an employee jump as if a whip-lash had cut him on the calves. He had jumped all right, as his voice showed. "It's not in our file," said he. "It's house bill No. 427, and it's apparently not here."

"The hell you say!" I exclaimed. "Why?"

"I really can't explain," he pleaded, and the frightened whine confirmed my suspicion. "I guess not," said I, making the words significant and suggestive. "And you're in my pay to look after such matters! But you'll have to explain, if this turns out to be serious."

"Apparently our file of bills is complete except that one," he went on. "I suppose it was lost in the mail, and I very stupidly didn't notice the gap in the numbers."

"Stupid isn't the word I'd use," said I, with a laugh that wasn't of the kind that cheers. And I rang off and asked for the state capitol on the "long distance."

Before I got my connection Saxe, whose office was only two blocks away, came bustling in. "The boy has been discharged, Mr. Blacklock," he began.

"What boy?" said I. "The boy in charge of the bill file—the boy whose business it was to keep the file complete."

"Send him to me, you damned scoundrel!" said I. "I'll give him a job. What do you take me for anyway? And what kind of a cowardly hound are you to disgrace an innocent boy as a cover for your own crooked work?"

"Really, Mr. Blacklock, this is most extraordinary," he expostulated. "Extraordinary? I call it criminal!" I retorted. "Listen to me. You look after the legislation calendars for me, and for Langdon, and for Roebuck, and for Melville, and for half a dozen others of the biggest financiers in the country. It's the most important work you do for us. Yet you, as shrewd and careful a lawyer as there is at the bar, want me to believe you trusted that work to a boy! If you did, you're a damn fool. If you didn't, you're a damn scoundrel. There's no more doubt in my mind than yours which of those horns has you sticking on it."

"You are letting your quick temper get away with you, Mr. Blacklock," he deprecated. "Stop lying!" I shouted. "I knew you had been doing some skulduggery when I first heard your voice on the telephone. And if I needed any proof, the meek way you've taken my abuse would furnish it, and to spare."

Just then the telephone bell rang and I got the right department and asked the clerk to read house bill 427. It contained five short paragraphs. The "joker" was in the third, which gave the state canal commission the right "to institute condemnation proceedings, and to condemn, and to abolish, any canal not exceeding 30 miles in length and not a part of the connected canal system of the state."

When I hung up the receiver I was so absorbed that I had forgotten Saxe was waiting. He made some slight sound. I wheeled on him, I needed a vent. If he hadn't been there I should have smashed a chair. But there was he—and I kicked him out of my private office and would have kicked him out through the anteroom into the outer hall, had he not gathered himself together and run like a jack-rabbit.

Since that day I have done my own calendar watching.

My lawyers had sold me out; I fool that I was, had not guarded the only weak plate in my armor against my companions—the plate over my back, to shed assassin thrusts. Roebuck and Langdon between them owned the governor; he owned the canal commission; my canal, which gave me access to tide-water for the product of my Manasquan mines, was as good as closed. I no longer had the whip-hand in National Coal. The others could sell me out and take two-thirds of my fortune, whenever they liked—

of what use were my mines with

no outlet now to any market, except the outlets the coal crowd owned?

As soon as I had thought the situation out in all its bearings, I realized that there was no escape for me now, that whatever chance to escape I might have had was closed by my uncovering of Saxe and kicking him. But I did not regret; it was worth the money it would cost me. Besides, I thought I saw how I could later on turn it to good account. A sensible man never makes fatal errors. Whatever he does is at least experience, and can also be used to advantage. If Napoleon hadn't been half dead at Waterloo, I don't doubt he would have used its disaster as a means to a great victory.

When I walked into Mowbray Langdon's office, I was like a thoroughbred exercising on a clear frosty morning; and my smile was as fresh as the flower in my buttonhole. I thrust out my hand at him. "I congratulate you," said I.

He took the proffered hand with a questioning look.

"On what?" said he. It is hard to tell from his face what is going on in his head, but I think I guessed right when I decided that Saxe hadn't yet warned him.

"I have just found out from Saxe," I pursued, "about the canal bill."

"What canal bill?" he asked.

"That puzzled look was a mistake, Langdon," said I, laughing at him. "When you don't know anything about

it, you look like that."

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I assented. And I decided that my sharp talk to Roebuck had set them to estimating my value to them.

"Sam Ellersly," Langdon presently remarked, "tells me he's campaigning hard for you at the Travelers. I hope you'll make it. We're rather a slow crowd; a few men like you might stir things up."

I am always more than willing to give others credit for good sense and good motives. It was not vanity, but this disposition to credit others with sincerity and sense, that led me to believe him, both as to the coal matter and as to the Travelers club.

"Thanks, Langdon," I said; and that he might look no further for my motive, I added: "I want to get into that club much as the winner of a race wants the medal that belongs to him. I've built myself up into a rich man, into one of the powers in finance, and I feel I'm entitled to recognition."

"Excuse me!" exclaimed I. "I'd turn her head. She'd go clean crazy. She'd plunge in up to her neck—and not being used to these waters, she'd make a show of herself, and probably drown, dragging me down with her, if possible."

Sam laughed. "Keep out of marriage, Matt," he advised, not so oblique to my real point as he wanted me to believe. "I know the kind of girl you've got in mind. She'd marry you for your money, and she'd never appreciate you. She'd see in you only the lack of the things she's been taught to lay stress on."

"For instance?"

"I couldn't tell you any more than I could enable you to recognize a person you'd never seen by describing him."

"Ain't I a gentleman?" I inquired.

He laughed, as if the idea tickled him. "Of course," he said. "Of course."

"Ain't I got as proper a country place as there is a-going? Ain't my apartment in the Willoughby a peach? Don't I give as elegant dinners as you ever sat down to? Don't I dress right up to the Piccadilly latest? Don't I act all right—know enough to keep my feet off the table and my knife out of my mouth?" All true enough; and I so crude then that I hadn't a suspicion what a flat contradiction of my pretensions and beliefs about myself the very words and phrases were.

"You're right in it, Matt," said Sam. "But—well—you haven't traveled with our crowd, and they're shy of strangers, especially as you are. You're too sudden, Matt—too dazzling—too—"

"Too shiny and new?" said I, beginning to catch his drift. "That'll be looked after."

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tips, I've lost on it, too. For I play my own tips—and that's more than can be said of my 'financier' in this town."

After a while I dragged in the subject. "One thing I am and will do to get myself in line for that club," I said, like a seal on promenade. "I'm sick of the crowd I travel with—the men and the women. I feel it's about time I settled down. I've got a fortune and establishment that needs a woman to set it off. I can make some woman happy. You don't happen to know any nice girls—the right sort, I mean?"

"Not many," said Sam. "You'd better go back to the country where you came from, and get her there. She'd be eternally grateful, and her head wouldn't be full of mercenary nonsense."

"Excuse me!" exclaimed I. "I'd turn her head. She'd go clean crazy. She'd plunge in up to her neck—and not being used to these waters, she'd make a show of herself, and probably drown, dragging me down with her, if possible."

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JEFFERSON AND HAMILTON.

The Great Gulf There Is Between Their Two Policies.

The national Democracy has gathered momentum in the last year or two and the greatly increased vote for Democratic candidates for congress and the election of Democratic governors at the last election is the proof of its increasing favor with the people. "Ten years ago they called our ideas insanity," said Mr. Bryan, speaking at Boston, "yet on no question that we ever discussed have we been more vindicated than on our idea that more money would make higher prices and better times. The Republican party has been in power for ten years, with undisputed rule. If it hasn't done anything that ought to have been done, it is its own fault. What is the result? We find the Republican party not so popular today. The party has gone on the toboggan slide, so that now it has just one man whom it regards as popular enough to be the candidate for president. Why is it that the president alone has escaped the paralysis that has fallen upon all the rest? There is only one explanation, and that is that his popularity is due to his following the Democratic doctrines." This may be true of some things, but President Roosevelt has done, but he still falls far short of being a Democrat, or doing all he could have done for the people. He has allowed the influence of the protected interests over the Republican politicians to prevent him from recommending tariff reform. Thus he has continued to charge enormous profits and keep up the present high cost of living. He favored the ship subsidy bill although one-fourth of his own party in congress voted with the Democrats to defeat it and those Republican members who voted against his recommendation were the most ardent supporters of some of his other policies. He favors and has done more to centralize power in the federal government than any of his predecessors, which is not only undemocratic but unconstitutional, and his efforts in that direction can be used as a precedent for further executive encroachment.

It is well for Democrats to remember the great gulf between the political creeds of Hamilton and Jefferson. The Hamilton policy was, and is today, that the great mass of the people are unfit for self-government and require a strong central government to manage them. That is why bosses develop like weeds in the Republican party.

The Republicans seem to like to be so bossed, but it would be impossible to find a true Democrat that would peacefully submit to it. The gulf, therefore, between Democracy and this modern Republicanism is as great and impossible as that between Father Abraham and Dives.

State Rights or Centralization.

The Hamiltonian theory that all good government can but proceed from centralized power at Washington has been thoroughly imbibed by President Roosevelt. In his last message to congress he said: "It cannot be too often repeated that experience has conclusively shown the impossibility of securing by the action of nearly half a hundred different state legislatures anything but ineffective chaos in the way of dealing with the great corporations which do not operate exclusively within the limits of any one state." Yet the fact that 14 states have brought the railroads to time by fixing either two-cent or 2 1/2-cent passenger rates, entirely demolishes the president's Hamiltonian theory that he is the only reformer that "does things" aided by an unwilling Republican majority of congress.

No one can show one cent saved from corporation plundering through any action of the president or congress; but there is the fact that the legislature of Ohio reduced passenger rates one-third, to two cents a mile, and that rate appears to give satisfaction to the people and the railroads submit to it, so it must be reasonable. Other states have made similar reductions and either by direct law, or through their railroad commissions, have reduced freight rates also. If that is "ineffective chaos in the way of dealing with the great corporations," the people no doubt wish the president and congress would do something in the same chaotic way. The further fact that the railroad presidents are united in urging that the president recommend congress to take control of the interstate railroad traffic and thus prevent the reforms the states are enacting, is another evidence of the advantage of the reserved rights of the states and their much more effective and quicker way of obtaining relief from corporation injustice than the corporation-controlled national government.

The Democratic doctrine of home rule has thus again proven its greater power to relieve the people from injustice than the combined and centralized power of a Republican president and a Republican congress. After all it is not words but deeds that count.

High Tariff and Monopoly.

In Germany they do not have trusts such as we have, but they organize combines, syndicates and cartels, which are as near monopolies as the law will allow. Thus, for instance, in place of a German steel trust they have a steel syndicate, which is now composed of 36 firms and individuals who are steel manufacturers, whose total output is 11,079,084 tons. To each firm is allotted the maximum tonnage it may produce and this tonnage is divided into two classes, Class A being semi-finished products, such as rails and shapes, and Class B being finished products. The average increase of allotments from January 1, 1896, to January 1, 1907, has been 23 per cent, and prices have advanced in about the same percentage as in this country, though values are lower.

Woman Kills Big Grizzly Bear.

Trinidad, Col.—On the Duling ranch in Stonewall, a large grizzly bear was shot and killed by Mrs. Duling, wife of the county commissioner, a few days ago. Mrs. Duling was alone on the ranch and was riding about looking after stock when she saw the bear eating a heifer it had killed. Mrs. Duling had a Winchester and promptly killed the grizzly. She is known as a remarkably brave woman and during her many years residence in the Stonewall has killed several bears, at one time saving her husband from what seemed sure death, when he was attacked by a female grizzly he had wounded. Mrs. Duling killed the bear when it was within a few feet of her husband.

Material for Music Strings

Source of Supply—Great Amount Required to Meet Demand.

"One of the most generally accepted, but mistaken, ideas that is entertained by the people of this country," said S. R. Huyett, American traveling representative of a foreign manufactory of gut strings, "is that strings used on musical instruments are manufactured from catgut. If that were true, the cats in this world would have been exterminated many years ago in supplying the market with material for musical instrument strings."

"The fact is that they are manufactured from the intestines of sheep, and in obtaining enough raw material even from these animals the manufacturers at times find difficulty."

"The only string made from the intestines of the feline is that used for surgical purposes—for sewing up wounds. One would be amazed to know that there are millions of musical instrument strings used in North America alone, and just think where the tabbies would be if they had to supply the consumption!"

"Another amazing thing is that there are over 700 different grades of musical instrument strings. The demand for strings in North America is increasing every year, especially in the south and in Mexico. There are more guitar strings sold in Mexico than any other kind, but through the south the banjo string still holds its own, despite the fact that every year has marked slight, but gradual falling off in the demand. The harp is becoming more popular, and there is a good demand for strings for this instrument."—Kansas City Journal.

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